

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

TenXsys

Idaho TechHelp

TechHelp Helps TenXsys Hatch New Products

Client Profile:

TenXsys Inc., a privately-held Eagle, Idaho, company, has a mission of gathering data about remote objects and transmitting the data electronically. Incorporated in February 2002, TenXsys aims to be the market leader in wireless telemetry and associated software solutions for humans and animals. From software used by NASA's Mission Control Center to human and animal health monitoring devices, TenXsys provides complete telemetry solutions that can be tailored to customer needs. The founders of TenXsys have a history of successful commercial product development experience as either engineers or managers in large companies such as Hewlett-Packard and Booz Allen & Hamilton, and in small firms as well. This blend of imagination and experience has helped TenXsys evolve from a handful of visionaries to a multifaceted team of nearly 20 people.

Situation:

TenXsys learned about Idaho TechHelp (TechHelp), a NIST MEP network affiliate, while conducting telemetry research at Boise State University (BSU) where the TechHelp New Product Development (NPD) lab is housed. TenXsys was looking for an organization that could help develop telemetry device housings that might have to be as small as an egg or burly enough to survive winter around the neck of an elk.

Solution:

TechHelp proved to be a great match for TenXsys for a number of reasons:

- TechHelp's NPD Lab is housed at BSU where TenXsys already enjoys a successful working relationship.
- Turning to TechHelp for assistance with housings allows TenXsys to focus on its primary area of expertise - telemetry.
- TechHelp's expertise in product design, finite element analysis and rapid prototyping allows TenXsys to quickly design, test, tweak and finalize housing designs.
- TechHelp's preference for a close working relationship fosters clear communication, trust and efficient project management.
- TechHelp's mix of seasoned NPD professionals and graduate student provides flexible pricing and a wide range of technical abilities and problem solving methodologies.
- Because TechHelp can make small production runs of housings on its prototyping machines, TenXsys is able to quickly respond to customer demand without having to tool up for a larger manufacturing process. This also gives TenXsys the flexibility to make product adjustments without having to retool. (Note: TechHelp plans to add additional prototyping materials to give companies like TenXsys more product options.)

Results:

www.mep.nist.gov



NIST is an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department's Technology Administration

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- * In a little over three years, TenXsys has grown to 19 employees and is currently doubling the size of its facility.
- * Initial products (true prototypes - first devices of their type) have passed regulatory testing and are nearing the end of the development phase. Follow-on orders are just beginning and TenXsys is successfully ramping up sales to customers in the US, Canada and Australia.
- * TenXsys completed Phases I and II of a \$670,000 Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) data fusion software project for NASA. Phase III funding is being sought.
- * TenXsys was awarded two SBIR grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and successfully moved both projects to Phase II.
- * TenXsys is currently working on a \$380,000 SBIR "energy scavenging" project with the USDA examining the feasibility of using animal motion to generate power for telemetry devices.
- * The Department of Defense (DoD) is funding TenXsys and BSU in a Phase I SBIR project to test new technologies that could help military personnel who have lost limbs use prosthetic devices more effectively.
- * TenXsys is increasing its focus on sports monitoring, a large and potentially lucrative market.
- * The TenXsys/BSU partnership builds strong ties between education and industry and provides new research opportunities and industry experience for faculty and students.
- * TenXsys is successfully demonstrating how SBIR grants can lead to product and company success and positive economic impact for Idaho.

Testimonial:

"TechHelp's NPD team has been very instrumental in providing TenXsys Inc. with prototypes and small production runs for a variety of devices. Kevin Haight and Steve Hatten of the TechHelp New Product Development team have not only been responsive to our extremely tight schedules, they've consistently delivered high quality parts and excellent service. On top of that, they've been very competitive with pricing. TechHelp plays a big part in our ability to hit customer shipments."

Joe Savola, R&D Director